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ABSTRACT

This story in the Tanaina Athapascan language (Susitna dialect) is about a Tanaina Chief and tells about Tanaina life in the nineteenth century. It is intended for competent speakers of the Alaskan language who have knowledge of the writing system. An interlinear English translation is included as well as a free English translation. (NCR)

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DIQELAS TUKDA

shem Pete

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DIQELAS TUKDA

Told by Shem Pete

Edited by James Kari

Translated with Billy Pete

Written in the
Tanaina language,
Susitna dialect

DIQELAS TUKDA

The Story of a Tanaina Chief

Told by Shem Pete
Transcribed and Edited by Jim Kari
Free translation written by Jane McGary

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SHEM PETE

INTRODUCTION

Shem Pete, born at Susitna Station in 1900, now lives at Nancy Lake. He is a highly regarded story teller and lead singer of the Upper Inlet Tanainas.

Diqelas Tukda, a biography of a Tanaina chief, is based on stories Shem's mother told and on Shem's memory of Diqelas Tukda's death in 1906. This story is rich in detail and in humor and tells a great deal about Tanaina life in the nineteenth century.

Jim Kari
July 1976

DIQELAS TUKDA

Q'udi qenaga nts'uk'a hghilet
Now words are not

Diqelas Tukda heyeł dghinihen heł
"Caches things father" the one they called you

nuhtghelnek. Diqelas Tukda Tahtna unhyaqah
I will tell. Diqelas Tukda Russians at first

ghela qenidatl' dughu Tahtnats' ludik
really they came when Russian gun

q'anghitik. Bey'a k'ghila.
he would carry around. His maternal uncle there was.

Yin ghunen eł Gheltsana q'anqudił
He that one with interior Athabaskans they would go to

ts'u yada ghuhdi dabak ghudahdi tsayu ghudahdi
and whatever tobacco tea

sbitsga ghudahdi eł huqghilak ts'u
matches with they would sell and

k'kidza qeyeq'adghilak. Yets' qesqa
fur they would trade. From this rich man

hghila.
he was.

Ki Diqelas Tukda dey'a eł yeh
Once Diqelas Tukda his uncle with there

Gheltsana tunu'idzu ełi. Ludik
Interior Athabaskans went back with him. Gun

k'a kut'iyeltun. Susitnu
he too carried inside his shirt. Susitna

hts'ahnidatl' ts'u henuqitdatl' idihdi.
they left from and they went back to them then.

Yentnu hkaynuqidatl'. Yun'e
Yentna River they went back up. Up

Gheltsana ghe nuqitdatl'.
Upper Kuskokwim Athabaskans to they returned.

Gheltsana ghunahdi ts'unhqiniłt'a gheli.
Gheltsana those they looked mean really.

"K'itigi nalaq'a ts'ak'nilu," heyełni.
"Too much he took from us," they said.

"Tuts'ułt'uhni," qeyełni. Ighi
"Let's throw him in the water," they said. But

Diqelas Tukda ghunhdi hq'inidulnen ts'u
Diqelas Tukda that one he found out and

hghi'an. Bey'a ghin k'a qit'aniyen
he saw them. His uncle that too he knew

Gheltsana tuhyułt'uhni ghuda yedughu
the Gheltsana intended to throw him in therefore
the water
k'a qit'aniyen.
too he knew.

Nutiha tedzeq'e qendugh niqagheyuł
Two nights fire he walks around

ts'ununqinilt'ak gheli hnuq'u yusdi idayq'en
he scowled really when fire burning

ghin ideggit tsagges eł. Dats'u
that he would poke poker with. Thus

qendugh niqagheyuł. Qil gheli hidinis
fire he would go around. Bad really they became

hnuq'u ludik ghin kut'i ts'ayeltses
when gun that from in his shirt he took it out

ts'u dzełyiq'e dik'eneltsis. Dats' q'u
and smokehole he shot through. Thus

ki "Yuyan nugheltsen! Yuyan nugheltsen,"
again "Sky is breaking! Sky is breaking,"

q'u ki qetnih. Yideghu nitsił t'ugh
again they would say. Then birchbark house

tgełt'u qihuhdeldeł. Yagheli
partition they would hide behind. Good

nuqedlah. Hqilnis. Qendugh
they became again. They were scared. Fire

niqatelghił ts'u k'elasts'a
he would go around and powder

yinuqahnełqet. Bedziq'e quyeghi'uyi ghin
he would put in. Firing pin that

k'dzilyasigga idzinudetset. Yinuk'tneses
cap he covered. He would load it

ts'u beq'u k'ghelgget t'ent'a. Kut'e
and hammer he would pull. In his shirt

nuyelt'eh yethdi yus qendugh ghu
he put it back in then fire thus

niqatelggis.
he moved around.

Nudeh hnayuli eł dey'a ghunen
Two nights after his uncle that one

"Tinunidus," yeł dghini. "Si k'i gu k'u sa
"You go back," he said to him. "I here right

tghesduł. Nen k'i tinunidus." Dekilaqa
I'll stay. You go back." His helpers

łuq'u heyeghetneq ts'u nuhtastnu.
all they picked up and they went back.

Dzan ts'idzanits' k'asi hq'ik'dulnen idi'ełdi
Midafternoon came when

yethdi dats' qełni. "Q'u si k'a
then thus he told them. "Enough I too

q'uhq'u tinutghesdzuł si," hełni.
now will go back," he told them.

"Yagheli," qeyełni.
"Good," they told him.

Nik'eldes ɖghu hqugh nintudzuł
An arrow shoots as far as he got to

dghu hets' h'ulni. Eba binq'a ghila
until he was afraid of them Hot his back it was

łu dghinih.
thus he said.

Yagheli beł nuqisdlan. Hts'anaseł̨daltuk'
Good with him it became again. He ran back out

yethdi nuseł̨endeltus nuseł̨endeltus ts'u
then he kept running and running and

nughił̨ghatl' hq'u htl'uynusdzu. Tets
it got dark when he caught up with them. At night

nuqudatl' ts'u daghiset ghu qayahdut'antst'a
they travelled and far visible place really

nihninu ts'u hnayul ts'u yet hnuq'u
they stopped and they camped and there when

heł stunuqidatl' ts'u hdunuqudatl' ts'u
they got away and they escaped and

qit'aqiniyen. Tuq'i dzani hqugh nunqitdatl'
they knew. Three days for they kept going back

ts'u ninuqitdatl' yethdi yaghelist'a
and they went that far then well

htneldih ts'u q'iłdu ninqitdatl'. Nuqitdatl'
they slept and home they got back. They returned

da Diqelas Tukda heyeł dghinihen ghun
when Diqelas Tukda the one they call that one

yinhdi "Iyni ełnen qeq'uhghitunen"
him "guns country the one who introduced to"

be'iyi k'dghila.
his name it was.

Betihdnghił̨t'a gheli łu. Qes ła ghila.
He was stingy really. A rich man he was.

Gheniniyu. Tsayu ghun ts'ełq'i bisuk
He got married. Tea that one one bag

ki k'ghun ideqet ts'q'u tsayu ghin
and a half he would buy and tea that

hyeyis hnuq'u tsik'a ts'andalgugi
they would drink when boards split

qendugh daydlu ts'u barga yeq'e
on the floor were and tea leaves on them

duqidetleh. Nuytnghełggus ts'u ghel'i
he would spread out. He would dry them and different

bisuk yinuqidenił. Nisqugh nilus hnuq'u
bag he would pour it in. Half full when

yagheli tsayu ki yinudełtl'et ts'u
good tea more he would pour in and

q'anqeyedełghis ts'q'u niłtunuqeyedełtl'et
they shook it up and they mixed it up

ts'u dats'i qeyeghudghiłt'a. Be'u ghunen
and thus they used it. His wife that one

uts'aydalnen. Uqil eydlan hnuq'u ghel'en
she died. She died when another

dek'isen ki ghenin'idzu ts'u yinhdi
woman again he married and her

Quqeghetna łu heyeł dghinih. Yink'a u'iya
Quqeghetna they called her. She too her name

qit'a idesni. Bets'enaqa k'ghila. Ts'ełt'an
I know. Children she had. One

ghun Danya heyeł dghinih. Ukela
there was Danya they called him. Her younger brother

ghunhdi Jake Healy heyeł dghinih.
that one Jake Healy they called him.

K'enubidaluq ghini. Tuqenkaq' ghu
He obtained power that. Alexander Creek

sukan hnuq'u iyni nu'ighetneq. Dghelisla
morning when gun he took. Mt. Susitna

qayu. Nunahdghudzuł ts'u
he went up. He was walking about looking and

ghedisla ghi'an. Gega t'eł'an.
black bear he saw. Berries it was picking.

Yenu'ilgguk ts'u k'dałtetl' ts'q'u
He went to it and he shot and

tsiydałyuq. Yet'us idi'ełdi yut'uh
he killed it. He cut it then above

qets' ghu mmm.... qetni ts'u yihuhnił'ani
towards "mmm...." was a noise and he looked for it

ełdi "nadabełi" qadadaynes. Gu
when whirling ball of feathers he heard. Here

k'tsanggahdi denets ts'u qeludetq'es
small grass he plucked and he wiped his hands

ts'u łuq'u gheli ha ghin ugguna ghin
and all entirely grease that his hands

heyqil'il. Nił ts'ahdghiłtuk' dghak ghini
he cleaned off. He unbuttoned coat that one

ts'u yiqahnastsut. Yen'iɬ'en. Utets'a
and sat under it. He waited for it. A cane

k'dilan. Yedghu heniydalggat. Ehniɬ'anhdi
he had. There he put it alongside. He looked as

yudeh ghu nadabeɬi ghin k'te'usts' niqaydubeɬ
above ball that clockwise was revolving around

ts'u yen'iɬ'en ts'u yen'iɬ'en
and he waits for it and he waits for it

ts'u gu gheli utsikiq'e gheli mmm...
and here on top of his head right "mmm..."

dadzuq hnuq'u yeggedeh k'taɬt'eq' betets'a
it goes when up he strikes his cane

qa. Ghinih k'kests'a naltsemi
with. That down feathers compressed

"nadabeɬi" qeyeɬnih bedzenidghidlut' ts'u
"nadabeɬi" they say he broke it up and

k'te'usts' niqaghelgheɬ ts'u nilts'itl'
clockwise he turns around and he closes his eyes

ts'u uq'ats'ah qets' k'etqet' ts'u hdghitset
and his armpits he pats and he quit

ts'q'u niɬk'ununattun hniɬ'anhdi k'kests'a
and he opened his eyes he looked as feathers

ghini guhqugh ka daghiɬkegh t'ghit'a ɬu.
those this big they were.

ɬuq'uhdi bets' yidzuq k'kests'a
All to him they came into feathers

dnagheltsaq'ist'a yehu daydlu.
a very few around there there were.

Nuteltlet yeghini łuq'u niłiydilu ts'q'u
He ran around those all he gathered and

yeł niłnuk'iyuts'. Ts'u yeł kut'e
he tied them up in a bundle. And in his clothes

k'ut'et,
he put it.

Ts'u ghedisla ghini yets' hnu nutasdyu.
And black bear that on it work he went back.

Łuq'u nił'u niynilu. Yilghal ts'u
All he butchered. He bundled it and

nuytasdghan. De'u ghun yets' tsinuk'didghan.
he packed it back. His wife that one to her he packed it back down.

"Ugha, k'ta tilts'ah," yełni.
"Come on, soup drink," she said to him.

"Nehda'uts' du t'esdzuq hu du!" yełni.
"The impossible nappened to me!" he said.

"Ki gu en'usen yi ełan yethdi k'enusk'daluq.
"Again here old man I am then I got lucky.

Hu'eltsan sit'i," yełni. Dek'isen ghun hnat'u
I'll fast," he said. Woman that in silence

eydu. Gu undat Diqelas Tukda k'enubidaluggi.
sat. This last time Diqelas Tukda obtained power.

Yethdi Tuqenkaq' ghu 1906 ts'dalts'i.
Then Alexander Creek 1906 we were staying.

Ełyuni binduhga eł si k'a tsadiyeltsin.
Spruce hen muzzle-loader with I first time I killed.

Tuhdghiłggen dghu.
It was in the spring.

Yedghu ełnen ghinu ka'a gheli.
There earth shook big really.

Dghaynigika' nadakaq' deghi'u. K'udalnen
Cache big in front of us it stood. It fell

dghu nts'u qits'ats'idinil.
when we didn't know.

Diqelas Tukda Susnikaq'
Diqelas Tukda mouth of the Susitna River

hkanaqidil'un yedghu k'qeydulghak
they took him down there they used to put up fish

ts'u quyusi ghu dilhi ghudahdi eł
and beluga smelt (hooligans) and things

nihdulket. Kist'a nihdulket. Yet
they put up. A lot they put up. There

hkanaqidil'un Diqelas Tukda ghun.
they brought him Diqelas Tukda that one.

Tsaltsiggi heyełnihi benulyuq.
A cormorant the one they call came as a sign.

Sukan idi'ełdi qugges q'u ighiłkegh
One morning swan as big as

ditbats keghhdi t'ghit'a bets'enteq'e
brown big one it was its legs

den'iłney. "Gguq, gguq, gguq," t'etni.
were long. "Gguq, gguq, gguq," it called.

Nts'uk'a hyes'ighi. Qeyeqenge dudines
They'd never seen it. Word (of it) they had heard

benuyilyuqt'i sunkda ghun stukda eła
when the sign came my mother my father with

Tuqenkaq' sughu hdaghelts'i. Sik'a ngheł'an.
Alexander Creek were staying. I too saw it.

Diqelas Tukda qenq'a niqatnulyes.
Diqelas Tukda's house it flew around.

Uqenq'a yet q'e dultlet. Kist'a
His house there on it it landed. Very

nts'u dit'alhq'u nutnilnen. Beq'es ghin
not long it flew back. Its neck that one

niłk'ets' nunk'ighastken ka t'ent'a.
crooked it was curved big it was.

Ndaha qayeh k'a hts'atnalneni dik'a qeyeł dghinih
Wherever place it flew from when they would say

q'u yethdi benuyilyuq qeyeł dghini.
then there would be a sign they would say.

"Diqelas Tukda nulyuq," qeyeł dghini.
"Diqelas Tukda the sign happened to," they said.

Sunkda ghunhdi baydalgi qeyeghayqun.
My mother skin boat sewed up.

Tlegh qeyighilu. Dehq'e duhyiłggat
Oil she put oil in it. On rack they put it up

ts'u qeynałggen. "Q'u hkats'dghunesni,"
and they dried it. "OK, down to mouth let's go,"

stukda dghini. Yutsit tuqeyeghitun
my father he said. Below they put it in water

hnuq'u dus bighelgguk. Yuni dghu
when front I got in. Up there

sq'ayehdeltset. Ts'u łkitni
they couldn't reach me. And if they try to grab

snuhdutnik. Yusi ghu benulggeya ninlgguk.
they can't touch me. Tip fork I went to.

Yeh gheli dghełtsek' ts'u yesughu ninlgguk.
There really I was small and thus I went.

Sq'ayehdeltset. "Sey'a ghunen gheł'ıłen yın,"
They couldn't reach me. "My son that one I'll watch him,"

stukda yełni ts'u sunkda ghun badet k'a
my father told her and my mother without from her

elugh k'a inayesul. Yus Susnikaq'
not yet I have never camped. Out mouth of Susitna River

hkats'daynik. Staya ghunhdi t'uhts'enghalyu.
we went. My stepfather sat on his knees.

Bidusga t'uhdaltun. Dusts' bighelgguk
Pillow he was on. Out in front I went

ts'u tl'unts ts'anatl'ughanlghel.
and toward the back I backed up.

Qil gheli q'udihdi ghastquni baydalgi
Bad really newly sewn sealskin boat

beqiltsun! Hniltsuni ha qil gheli.
it stunk! Smelly grease bad really.

Qutsaghił'uy quyusi gha qeyighinel
Seal beluga grease they had poured in it

qeyenałggen ts'u heyiłtlegh. Qil gheli!
they dried it and smeared it in it. Bad really!

Ts'dusits'idest'at. Ts'ełq'i bets'es
I couldn't breathe. One of his knees

baghesdghes. "Qusasiłyił! Qusasiłyił!" desni.
I bit. "Give me air! Give me air!" I said.

Niłts'q'u beł hitestsis. "Egedu!" ghu nih.
Together I really bit him. "That hurts!" he said.

"Qusasiłyił!" beł desnih. Ts'adats' sghuda
"Give me air!" I told him. How because of me

tak'utsesni du? Ighi nts'uk'a hdist'ak hq'u
could he paddle? But not long

qinusełgheł · Oinutsisk'natset.
he pushed me back in. He pushed my head in (the boat).

Sghuduni eł ts'iłde hq'u Susnikaq'
My lesson with one thus Mouth of Susitna

nits'ghaghinik idi'ełdi Diqelas Tukda
we arrived at when Diqelas Tukda

qil taydlan qetni.
was starting to die they said.

"Ughast'a, betsa'a ghun bets'
"Hurry, his daughter that one to her

tehnas," qetni. "Tukdasla nunul'anni,"
you go," they said. "Little father let her see again,"

qetni.
they said.

Staya ghun yetq'u siten. Nutna kiłqay
My stepfather there held me. Two boys

nił'edaqhetdzaq' ts'u yun'e
jumped in (a boat) together and up river

kihnaghiqan. Baqay ts'itayenq'e
they went. Birchbark canoe in the middle

dahyełdu ki sunkda ghun hełts' idi'ełdi
they sat her and my mother evening then

nishnuqidul'un. Hnayul q'ut'en idi'ełdi
they brought her back. The next morning then

hnuq'u "Nuk'dultetl'ni 'iyni ełnen
on "Let him shoot again 'guns country

qeq'uhghitunen' si'i," qeyełni.
he introduced to' he is," they said.

"Nuk'dultetl'ni," qeyełni ts'u
"Let him shoot again," they said and

qeyeł qutałdghiłkits. K'enyes
they carried him out on a caribou skin mat. Pole

k'inihnidaghi'uyi tabagh ghu nishtnaghetgik
fish drying tree beach there many stood

t'ghit'a. K'eytin qeyeq'e
there were. Fish backbones on them

nughiłggugi. Ts'bala ghini uyikena
they would dry. Spruce those branches

banday'uyi ghini nits'qeyedeł'eł ts'u
sticking out those they would drift down and

tits'aqeyedelket ts'u qeya'inghut'is
they would take them out of the and they grabbed it
water
ts'u ggaqeyedełtset ts'u hniqeyediyeł.
and they stand it up straight and they stood it in
a hole.
K'inihnidaghi'uyi be'iya k'dghila.
Fish drying tree its name it was.

K'inihnidaghi'uyi yeyesquq' qeyeł nitałdin'et.
Fish drying tree alongside they set him down on a ma

Bidusga ghini k'enyes ghinhdi baytnaltun
Pillows those pole that bunched up

t'ehyiluq. Yethdi qayenhyeniłyel. Binduhga
they fixed. Then they sat him up. Muzzle-loader

galeq benaltl'ini elugh diltetl'
paper tied on (price tag) not yet shot

qeyets'anitun. Quyusi ghini bes elugh q'u
they took out. Beluga those bank along

bayeldatl'. Quyusi ghin quyenyelya
they came. Beluga those were swimming up showing
their backs
wus, wus.... Q'uyethdi "Iyni ghin uq'edi i'un
Then "Gun that its sight

seł nuheldulnen. K'itsey ghin k'a
with me it got dark. Barrel that

nts'uk'a seł bayahdit'an. Iyni ghin sts'anaghanlkit,
I can't even see. Gun that take it away from t

helni. Qeyets'anaqeyeghalkit ts'u
he told them. They took it from him and

ɋeyeł nik'unutl'ughildatl'. Balatga ka' qeyeghuqaghiłnik.
they lifted him up. Tent big they pitched.

Yuyuh qeyeł nutl'ughuldatl'. Yuyuh
Inside they put him. Inside

qeyeł ninuk'ni'et. Nughiłghatl'.
they set him down. It got dark.

Dusgeda Tukda ɋeyeł dghinihen yin k'a
Dusgeda Tukda they one they call he too

dzanq'u uyits' k'ilanh. Dzanq'u qesqa nelanh.
still he was still alive. Still rich man he was.

K'enakatnu quɋesqa ghila'en. Badi
Knik their boss he was. Umiak

beł qayeghiqats'. Yus ghu nutiq'e
he was coming in on. Way out there in the salt water

hdelghes. Tanahdelghesi.
they were singing. The sound was fading up and down in volume.

Yethdi yaghelist'a ɋadahdenes.
Then well they heard them.

Qubeł tak'tayqats' hqitni. Yaghelist'a
They're starting to sink they thought. Well

ɋadahdenes. Yethdi yaghelist'a k'ahdelyas.
they heard them. Then nicely they were singing.

Uu uu hey hey hey hey aa. . .
(a rowing song)

ahdulyak. "Yaghelina," łu heł qetni.
they sang. "They're fine," they said.

Ki yudu ghu qubeł hts'ak'niqats'.
Point down there they were coming from.

Yethdi ts'iłts'en k'uyts'en'i uq'etna
And one side sixteen men

batak'elas. Yats'en k'a k'uyts'eni
were rowing. Other side too sixteen

uq'etna batak'elas. Badika gheli hkayeghiqats'.
men were rowing. Big umiak really was coming.

Dusgeda Tu' qeyeł dghinihen yuset
Dusgeda Tu' the one they called bow

dghu inukiq'e ya san. Niłghedzadaghalnik.
on tip of he stood. He held his arms out.

Ltah qesqa gheli ghuna łu
He swayed back and forth rich men really those

yaqets' łu qut'ih łu. Dats' t'et'an ltah
this way they did. Thus he did swaying

t'et'an qeyenuł'ani ghuda. Kist'a gheli
he was they see him in order to. Really
(showing off)
ghel'ek łu. Heyighile.
he was making magic. They feared him.

Qeyeł niqaghinik.
They landed.

Łuq'u gheli Tebughnen qayeht'ana, Susitnu
All really Tyonek people, Susitna

qayeht'ana, Dasq'e qayeht'ana, K'enakatnu
people, Kroto Creek people, Knik

qayeht'ana, Eydlughet qayeht'ana, Tuqenkaq'
people, Eklutna people, Alexander Creek

qayeht'ana, łuq'u gheli ts'iłde nihnidatl'
people, all really together they came

ghu t'qinilt'ana k'ghila. Uqenga
there many people there were. News of him

ndalnen. Qesqa qil taydlan.
spread. The rich man was about to die.

Susnikaq' ghu hdaytsek'.
Mouth of the Susitna there it was small.

Quyusi ts'ełq'i nutiha k'a chiqeł'is.
Beluga one two or they killed.

Quq'itnełneh. Q'uyethdi łtaqil'i quyusi
It was insufficient for them. Then eight beluga
nuti hdghiłnen. Q'uyethdi qubiyedilt'a.
got stranded in the tide. Then there was enough for them.
Q'uyethdi yagheli qutiya en'idałt'ay
Then good their strength as much as (as much as they could carry)
qulaq'a ghideh. Łuq'u qubenighideh.
they gave to them. All they gave to them.

Q'ut'en idi'ełdi sukan ts'aneset
Morning next in the morning I woke up

sghu'ut ghu hets' qeyeq'atseghdelyas
next to me there to him they were crying for

ki q'u ki. Q'ayet gu qubeł tsik'yułnahi
already. The day before here hunting for them

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ghuda qeyeł qutl'ughuldatl' ts'u k'enyes
due to they brought him out and pole

ayenhyeniłyel ts'u iyni qeyetl'aniłtsey.
they leaned him against and gun they put against his shoulder
"Qil," dghini. Ts'u yuyuh
"No good," he said. And inside

qeyeł qeyenutl'ughuldatl'. Q'ut'en idi'ełti
they brought him back. Morning the next

q'u ki qeyeç'a tseghdelyas ki. Tsitayni
already they were crying. He started to die

dghu tsik'ułnahi ghuda. Be'iyna
hunting due to. His gun

qeyetl'aniłtsey. "Qil," ni.
they put it against his shoulder. "No good," he said.
Yinhdi sughu deltetl'i qeyets'
He was the one firearms from him

qadadaynes. "Iyni ełnen qeq'uhghitunen"
they had heard. "Guns country he had introduced to"

heyeł dghinihen.
they called him.

Q'uyethdi badi uyaga ghini
Then umiak his body that

danaqeyeghaghiłnik. Ts'u k'iyi eł t'ehyiluggi q'e
they put it in. And a spell with they had hexed him

t'ghit'a. Hnayul hnuq'u q'ut'en
it appeared. The next day when in the morning

ts'ełq'i unagga lteł. K'daltetl'i
one of his eyes burst. It made a booming noise

gheli. Unagga lteł. Hełts' hnuq'u ki
really. His eye burst. Evening when other

ts'iłts'en unagga ghin ki q'u lteł.
side his eye that one also it burst.

Yahets' sughu k'iyi eł tsiqeyeghił'ikna
In this way spell with those who were killed

k'ghilat'i.
they were.

Tuqenkaq' nuqitdal'un.
Alexander Creek they started to bring him back to.

Ts'q'u bekelasla "Dadala"
And his little brother "Little Daddy"

heyeł dghinihen. Bekelasla nts'uk'a stsegh.
they called him. His little brother didn't cry.

Dats'u hyitałyini kiłqay
Like this they were about to grab him young men

dendałteyna. Łuq'u heyitałyin
strong ones. All they would grab him

qil tsihughelnahi ghuda t'ent'a
he tried to kill himself due to it appeared

hyitni.
they thought.

Baqay ghini baydalgi yada nuqutdeł.
Canoes those skin boats all they went back.

Susnikaq' ghu hts'anink'et
Mouth of Susitna from there they extended in a line

ts'u Tuqenkaq' hkayenaghik'et łu qeyeł dghinih.
and Alexander Creek It extended to they said.

Bekela ghun qayehyułgheli
His younger brother that one drum

nił ghek'qulghił. Łuq'u gheli qeyeł dahyeghilu.
he was hitting. All they got ready.

Ghudehdi eł badi at qeyeł dak'iydlu. Ukela
Stuff with boat in they put with it. His younger brother

nts'uk'a stsegh ts'u Tuqenkaq' ghu
wasn't crying and Alexander Creek there

beł qinuk'utqats'. Yethdi bingha
they brought him back. Then his older brother's

qenq'a qayahdast'it yun'it tesq'e bingha
house it was visible up on hill his older brother's

qenq'a ghu ts'itl'uhqinił'uhkda
house there sticking out over the bank shabbily

t'qighit'a. Qayahdast'it. Yethdi
it was. It was visible. Then

qeyenuqighulnigi ghin yaqek'nases.
carrying his body that he fell.

"Ada singha," tayel. Heyeghetneq.
"Dear my older brother," he shouted. They grabbed him.

Qeyeł k'adidatl' ts'u qeyequk'dghi'un.
They began to sing with him and they made a mourning song.

Ts'u hyiten ghu nuk'teldzes.
And they held him there he began to dance.

Beł nqanak'itqats'. Dabesqeyghalkit.
They brought him back. They pulled him out.

Ukela hyiten ts'u bingha
His little they held and his older brother
brother
qeyeł dak'ghinłnik ts'u yungge niqayghinłtset.
they brought in and up there they lay him.

Nqaqidał ts'u nqaqidał
(Boats) kept landing and they kept landing

ts'u tik'u hyiłdeł. Tuqenkaq'
and in the woods they put them. Alexander Creek

ghu gga hdaytsek'. Yada baydalgi
tiny it was small. Whatever skin boats

ghudehdi badi ghudehdi tik'u hyilas
various umiaks various in the woods they carried
them
Ya hyiłyał ts'u yuneh yats' nihyelas
They picked them up and up that way they put them

niqahghunesi ghuda qułahi ghuda.
those landing due to to make room in order to.

Yaqets'u ghu t'qet'an ts'u łuq'u gheli
Thus they did and everyone really

hkayehghidatl'. Ełnents' qeyeniłnik.
they came to. In the ground they buried him.

Q'uyethdi tsayu tnałghets da baq'adi
Then tea was boiled when his belongings

hts'ahnilu. Benkiq'atl'a ts'inun nuk'nink'et
he gave out. A corner across (line) was stretche

t'ehqiluq. K'enq'ena ghini baq'adi
they made. Dentalium those his belongings

ghini eł duqeyenaydlu. U'iyna ghudehdi
those with they hung up. His guns

ts'eda ghudehdi delbahi ghudehdi, Tahtna
blankets cloth Russians

ghu qeyeł qanidatl'i delbahi.
with them when they came cloth.

Kist'a quht'ana k'ghila. "Ts'ił de'iteni
Many people there were. "One handful

uts'a'ilk'elen," heł dghinih. "Sitsa ghini
he should tear off," they told them. "Calico that

bitgal ghini eł inłkit," heł qetni
linen that with you take it," they told them

qugguna hqugh hnuq'u qeyedeq'es ts'u
their hands to when they cut it and

yets'ahyiges ts'u qubets'ayilk'ełi
tore it off and what they had torn off

hlaq'a hyi'et. "Ts'ił iteni uts'a'ilk'elen,"
they gave to them. "One handful he should tear off,"

łu heł hdghinih.
they would say to them.

Quht'ana en'its' t'hghit'a sit'i. En'its'
People poor they were. Poor

t'ehghit'a. Qesqa ghuna k'a qesqa.
they were. Rich men those ones rich they were.

Diqelas Tukda yinhdi ełnen q'e qesqa ghila'en.
Diqelas Tukda he in the country richest man he was.

"Iyni ełnen qeq'uhghitunen" be'iyi
"Guns country the one who had introduced to" his name

k'ghila. Guhqugh yan q'u heł nuhtghelnek.
it was. This far only to you I'll tell you.

DIQELAS TUKDA

This story is of another time. I'll tell you about the man they called Diqelas Tukda, "Caches things father." Long ago, when the Russians came, Diqelas Tukda would carry around a Russian gun. With his maternal uncle he would go to the interior Athabaskans and trade with them, selling them tobacco, tea, and matches in exchange for furs. From this Diqelas Tukda became a rich man.

Once Diqelas Tukda and his uncle went back to the inland Athabaskans again. He carried a gun inside his shirt too. They left from Susitna and went back to those people. They went back up the Yentna River and returned to the Upper Kuskokwim people. Those inland people looked really mean. "He took too much from us," they said. "Let's throw him in the river." But Diqelas Tukda found out what they meant to do. His uncle knew the inland people meant to throw him in the water too.

For two nights he walked around the fire, scowling and poking up the fire with a stick. Thus he kept walking around the fire. When they got really mean he took out the gun he had inside his shirt and shot through the smokehole. Then the people would cry, "The sky is breaking! The sky is breaking!" Then they would hide behind the partition in the birchbark house. They became real good again. They were scared. Diqelas Tukda's uncle walked around the fire and put powder in the gun. He covered up the firing pin cap. He loaded it and pulled the hammer back. Then he put it back in his shirt and kept on walking around the fire.

After two nights of this his uncle told him, "You go back. I'll stay right here. You go back." His helpers picked up everything and went back. When afternoon came he told the inland people, "That's enough. Now I too will go back."

"Good," they said.

Until he got out of arrow range he was afraid of them; his back felt hot, as he used to say.

Then he felt good again. He ran back out and kept running and running, and when it got dark he caught up with them. They travelled at night, and when they got far away they stopped at a good lookout point and spent the night. Then they knew they had escaped. When they travelled back for three days, and then they had slept well, and then they got back home. When they returned the one they call Diqelas Tukda was given the name "The man who introduced guns to the country."

He was really stingy. He was a rich man. He got married. He would buy a bag and a half of tea. They would drink the tea and he would spread out the leaves on some split boards on the floor. He would dry them and put them in another bag. When it was half full, he would pour in some good tea and shake it up and mix it up, and that was what they used. His first wife died and he married another woman; they called her Quqeghetna. I know her name too. She had children. They called one of them Danya. Her younger brother was called Jake Healy.

Diqelas Tukda obtained power. One morning at Alexander Creek he took his gun and went hunting. He was walking around on Mt. Susitna and he saw a black bear picking berries. He went to it and shot it and killed it. As he was cutting it open he heard a noise, "Mmm..." above his head, and when he looked up he saw a whirling ball of feathers. He plucked some grass and wiped his hands entirely clean of grease. He unbuttoned his coat and sat under it. He waited for it.

He had a cane. He put it alongside him. As he watched, the feather ball was flying around clockwise above his head. He waits for it and waits for it and then, right here on top of his head, when it went "Mmmm...", he strikes up with his cane. He broke up that compressed down-feather thing they call the "nadabeɬi"; then he turned around clockwise, closed his eyes, patted his armpits, stopped, and opened his eyes. As he looked, those down feathers were this big. They all came into him, those down feathers · A few feathers were left scattered around there. He ran around gathering them all up and he tied them up in a bundle, and put it in his clothes.

Then he went back to work on the black bear. He butchered it all. He bundled it and packed it back. He packed it down to his wife.

"Come on, drink some soup," she said to him.

"The impossible happened to me!" he said. "Here I am, an old man, and I got lucky. I'll fast," he said. The woman sat in silence. This was the last time Diqelas Tukda obtained power.

Then in 1906 we were staying at Alexander Creek. That was the first time I killed something, a spruce hen, with a muzzle-loader. It was in the spring.

There was a really big earthquake there. Our big cache stood by the creek. We didn't even know when it fell down.

They took Diqelas Tukda down to the mouth of the Susitna River where they used to put up fish, beluga and hooligans and other things. They put up a lot. They brought that man Diqelas Tukda there. The bird they call "tsaltsiggi," the cormorant, came as a sign. It came one morning, a big brown one as big as a swan; its legs were long. "Gguq, gguq, gguq," it called. They'd never seen it before, but they had heard of it. When the sign came, my mother and father were staying at Alexander Creek.

I too saw it.

It flew around Diqelas Tukda's house. It landed there on his house. After a little while it flew back. It had a big, crooked, curved neck. Whatever place it flew from, then they would say it was a sign. "The sign happened to Diqelas Tukda," they said.

My mother sewed up a skin boat. She put oil on it. They put it up on a rack and dried it. "OK, let's go down to the mouth of the river," my father said. They took it down and put it in the water and I got in the front. They couldn't reach me up there. If they tried to grab me, they couldn't touch me. I went right up to the fork at the tip. I was really small and I went up there. They couldn't reach me. "I'll watch my son," my father told my mother; I had never camped away from her before. We went out to the mouth of the Susitna River. My stepfather was kneeling on a pillow. I went out in front and then backed up toward the back. That newly sewn sealskin boat stunk really bad! The grease was really bad and smelly. They had poured seal and beluga grease in it, dried it, and smeared grease on it. It was really bad! I couldn't breathe. I bit one of my stepfather's knees. "Give me air! Give me air!" I cried. I really chomped into him. "That hurts!" he said. "Give me air!" I told him. How could he paddle with me like that? Pretty soon, though, he pushed me back and shoved my head down into the boat. So with that lesson of mine, we arrived at the mouth of the Susitna, where they told us that Diqelas Tukda was about to die.

"Hurry, go to his daughter," they said. "Let her see her dear father once more," they said.

My stepfather held me there. Two boys jumped in a boat together and went up the river. They sat my mother in the middle of the birchbark canoe with them, and in the evening they brought her back. The next morning, the people said, "Let him shoot again, for he is 'the man who introduced

guns to the country.' Let him shoot again." They carried him out on a caribou skin mat. There were many fish-drying poles standing there on the beach. They would dry split fish on them. They would float spruce trees with branches sticking out down the river and they would pull them out and stand them upright in holes on the beach. They called them "k'inihnidaghi'uyi," "fish drying trees."

They set him down beside a fish drying tree. They fixed pillows bunched up against the pole. Then they propped him up. They brought out a muzzle-loader that had never been fired, it still had the price tag attached to it. Those beluga came swimming along the bank with their backs showing above the surface, going "wus, wus." Then Diqelas Tukda said, "It's dark around the gunsight. I can't even see the barrel. Take that gun away from me," he told them. They took it away from him and they lifted him up. They pitched a big tent. They put him inside. They set him down. It got dark.

The man they called Dusgeda Tukda was still alive too. He was still a rich man. He was the big boss at Knik. He was coming in on an umiak. Way out there on the salt water they were singing. The sound of the song swelled and faded. Then they heard them well. They thought they were starting to sink. They heard them well. Then they were singing nicely, a rowing song:

"uu uu hey hey hey hey aa..."

they sang. "They're fine," said the people. They were coming around the point down there. Sixteen men were rowing on one side and sixteen men on the other side. It was a really big umiak that was coming. The one they called Dusgeda Tukda stood at the tip of the bow. He held his arms out. He swayed back and forth -- that's the way those really rich men did. He was swaying so they could see him. He was really making magic. They feared him. They landed.

All the people of Tyonek, the people of Susitna, the people of Kroto Creek, the people of Knik, the people of

Eklutna, the people of Alexander Creek, all of them came together there; there were many people. The news about him spread. The rich man was about to die.

The mouth of the Susitna was small there. They killed one or two beluga. It wasn't enough. Then eight beluga got stranded in the tide. Then there was enough for them. Then they gave them as much as they could carry. They gave them everything.

The next morning when I woke up the people around me were already crying. The day before, because he had been trying to hunt for them, they brought him out and leaned him against a pole and put his gun against his shoulder. "No good," he said. And they brought him back inside. The next morning they were already crying. He started to die because he had tried to hunt.
They put his gun against his shoulder. He was the one who had told them about firearms. They called him "the man who introduced guns to the country."

Then they put his body in the umiak. And it appeared that he had been put under a spell. The next day in the morning one of his eyes burst. It made a really loud booming noise. His eye burst. In the evening the other eye also burst. That's the way it happened with those who were killed by a spell.

They started to bring him back to Alexander Creek. They called his younger brother "Dadala." His little brother didn't cry. The strong young men were about to grab him like this. They were all going to grab him if they thought it looked like he would try to kill himself in grief.

All the canoes and skin boats went back. They extended in a line from the mouth of the Susitna all the way to Alexander Creek, so they said. His younger brother was beating a drum. They got everything all ready. They put everything in the boat. His younger brother wasn't crying

when they brought him back to Alexander Creek. Then his older brother's house was visible up on the hill there. sticking out over the bank in a ramshackle way it was. It was visible. Then he fell as he carried the body. "My dear older brother," he shouted. They grabbed hold of him. They began to sing and he started to make a mourning song. As they held him there, he began to dance. They brought him back. They pulled him out. They held his younger brother while they brought the older brother's body in and laid it up there. The boats kept landing and landing and they put them up in the woods. Alexander Creek was very tiny. They picked up all the umiaks and skin boats and carried them up that way in order to make room for those that were landing. So everybody came to the village. They buried him. Then when the tea was ready, he gave out his belongings. A line was stretched across a corner. They hung up his dentalium and his other belongings, his guns and blankets and the cloth that the Russians had brought when they came.

There were many people there. "Each person tear off one handful," he told them. "Take that calico, take that linen," they told them, and they took handfuls and cut it and tore it off, and what they had torn off they gave to them. "Each person tear off a handful," he said to them.

They were poor people, very poor. But those chiefs were really rich. Diqelas Tukda was the richest man in the country. His name was "The man who introduced guns to the country." That's all I'll tell you.